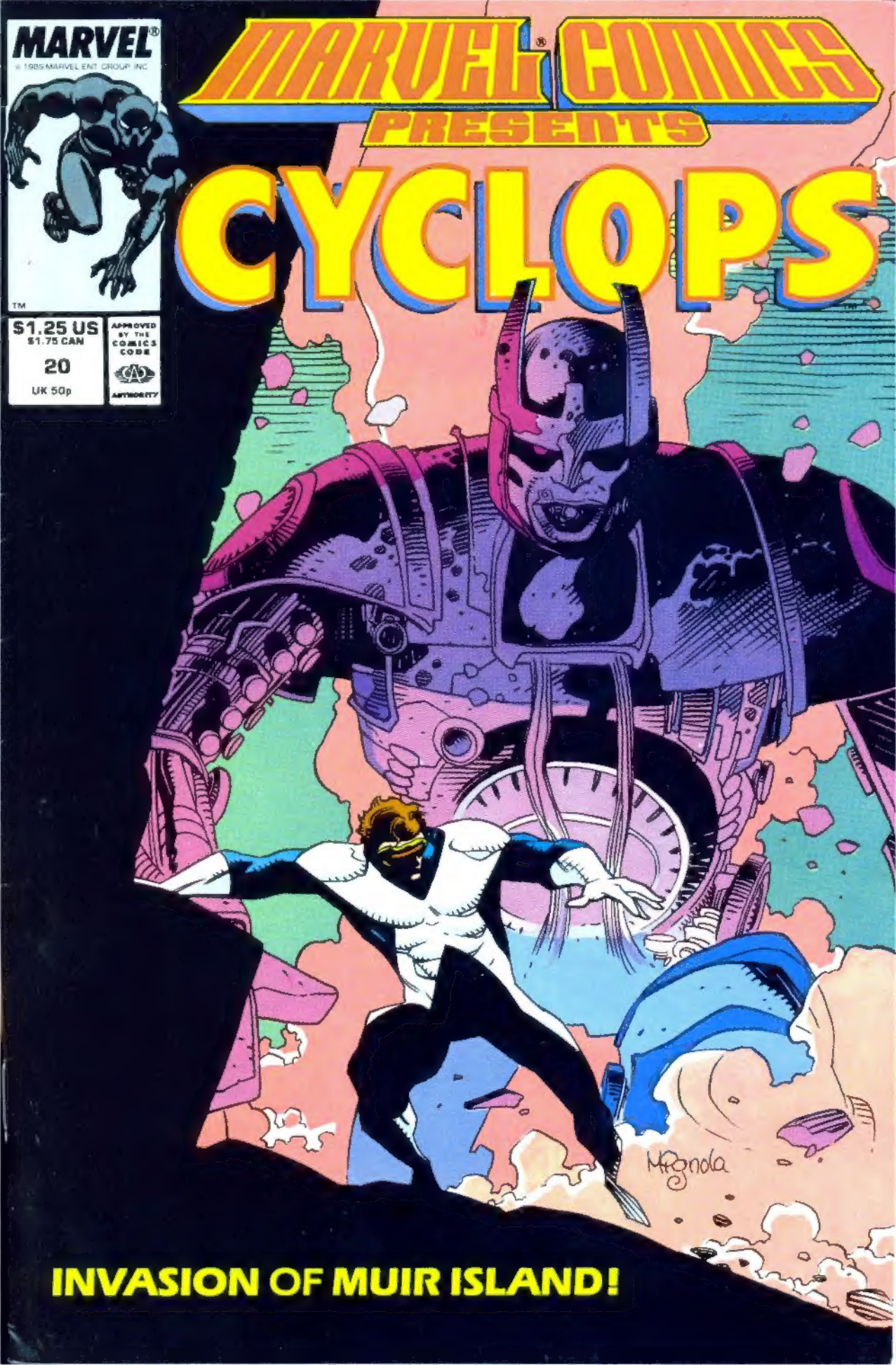
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CYCLOPS
INVASION OF MUIR ISLAND!

MARVEL® COMICS PRESENTS™

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CYCLOPS "THE RETRIBUTION AFFAIR" 1

WRITER — Bob Harras
PENCILER — Ron Lim
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LETTERER — Agustin Mas
COLORIST — Andy Yanchus

"CONSCIENCE OF THE KING" — PART 4 OF 8

While under the influence of the sinister Master Mold, Dr. Moira MacTaggert has created a genetically enginered virus designed to destroy mutants. It is a virus that has already claimed two victims, a young girl and the former X-Man, Sean Cassidy. Now these two have been kidnaped by Master Mold's robot servitors, and their only hope for survival lies with Scott Summers, the man called Cyclops.

BLACK PANTHER "PANTHER'S QUEST" 9

WRITER — Don McGregor
PENCILER — Gene Colan
INKER — Tom Palmer
LETTERER — Joe Rosen
COLORIST — Glynis Oliver

"HATRED UNDER TEARS" — PART 8 OF 25

Sarah Slade tells the Black Panther that she has not seen her husband, Patrick, but that knowledge of the Panther's missing mother prompted him to some wild scheme. The Panther is unaware that a man on a nearby rooftop has been spying on Slade's curio store. And reports the arrival to Elmer "Sex 'N Violence" Gorel Shortly thereafter, South African troops invade the black township with tear gas vehicles.

DR. STRANGE "NIGHTMARE IN SUBURBIA" 17

WRITER — Fabian Nicieza
PENCILER — Mark Badger
INKER — Mark Badger
LETTERER — Agustin Mas
COLORIST — Robbie Busch

"THE FLAWED FLESH" — PART 2 OF 2

Stephen Strange is a Master of the Mystic Arts. With an almost casual disinterest, he has investigated a minor demonic presence in Minerva, Ohio.

He has discovered that the dimensional disruption reaches farther and deeper than he had ever anticipated. It reaches into other realms—and into a family's innocent heart . . .

CLEA 25

WRITER — Peter Gillis
PENCILER — Ron Lim
INKER — Jim Sanders III
LETTERER — Todd Klein
COLORIST — John A. Wilcox

"AT THE BOTTOM OF MY GARDEN"

Clea — the daughter of the Dark Dimension, pupil and beloved of the Sorceror Supreme, Dr. Strange. She conquered her mother, Umar, and ascended the throne from which Umar and her brother, the dread Dormammu have ruled in that sinister universe. Only now she must deal with an aspect of the inheritance she never dreamed existed.

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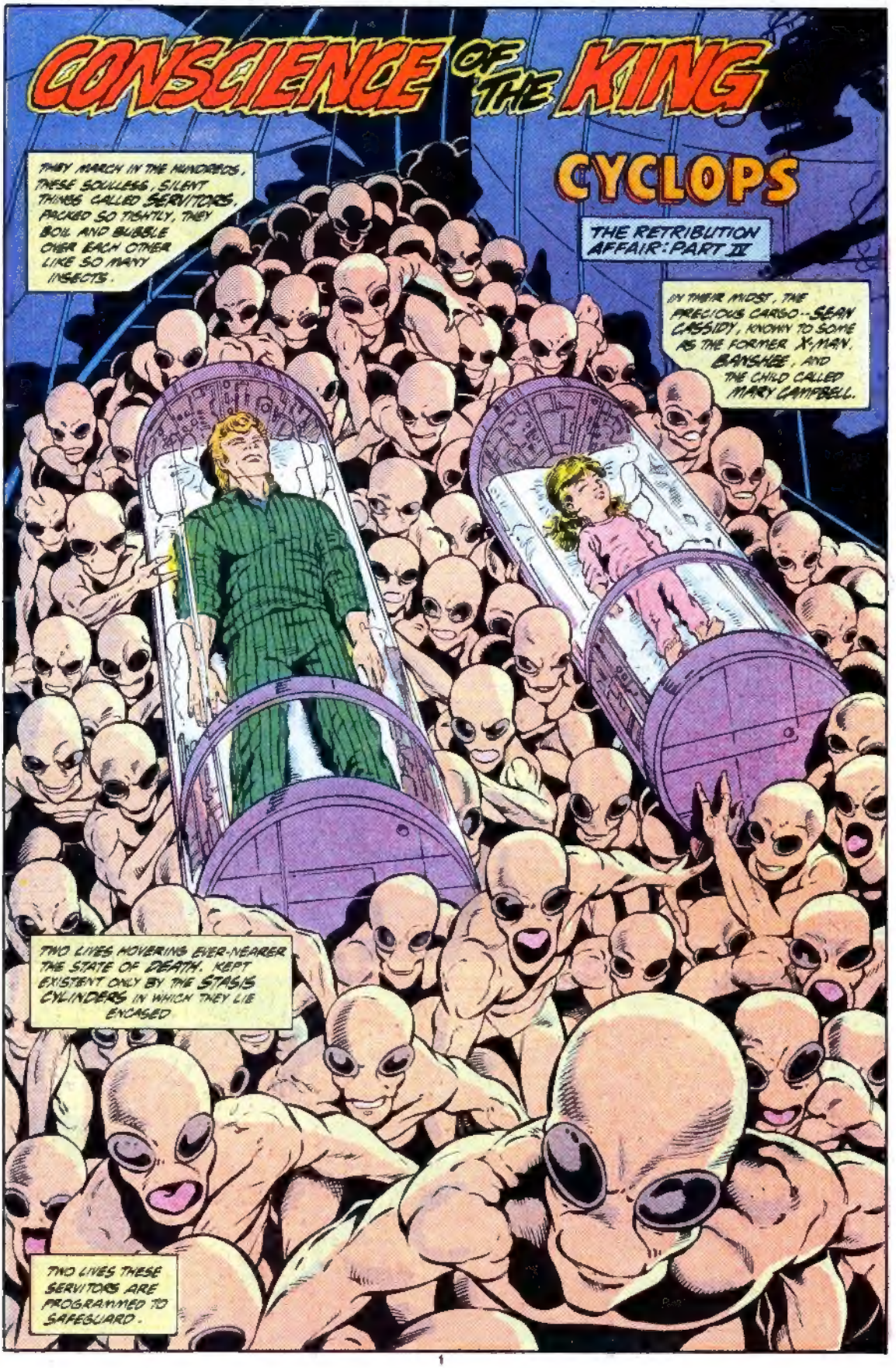
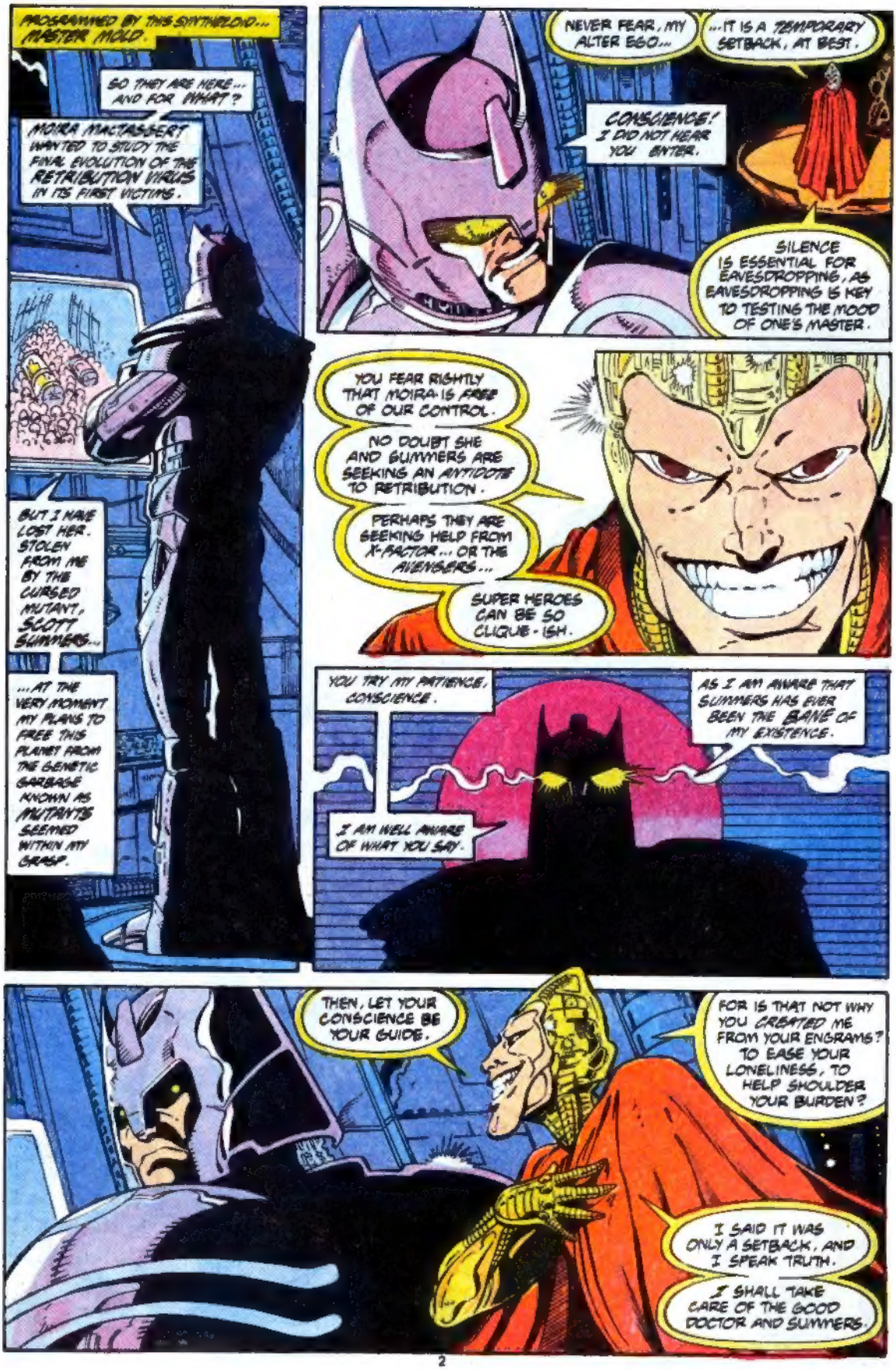
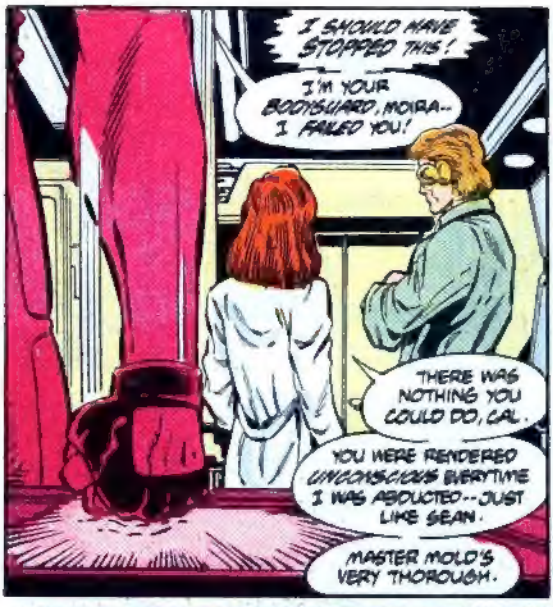

CONSCIENCE OF THE KING
CYCLOPS
THE RETRIBUTION AFFAIR: PART II
THEY MARCH IN THE HUNDREDS, THESE SOULLESS, SILENT THINGS CALLED SERVITORS. PACKED SO TIGHTLY, THEY BOIL AND BUBBLE OVER EACH OTHER LIKE SO MANY INSECTS.
IN THEIR MIDST, THE PRECIOUS CARGO--SEAN CASSIDY, KNOWN TO SOME AS THE FORMER X-MAN, BANSHEE, AND THE CHILD CALLED MARY CAMPBELL.
TWO LIVES HOVERING EVER-NEARER THE STATE OF DEATH. KEPT EXISTENT ONLY BY THE STASIS CYLINDERS IN WHICH THEY LIE ENCASED.
TWO LIVES THESE SERVITORS ARE PROGRAMMED TO SAFEGUARD.


PROGRAMMED BY THIS SYNTHEZOID... MASTER MOLD.
SO THEY ARE HERE... AND FOR WHAT?
MOIRA MACTAGGERT WANTED TO STUDY THE FINAL EVOLUTION OF THE RETRIBUTION VIRUS IN ITS FIRST VICTIMS.
BUT I HAVE LOST HER. STOLEN FROM ME BY THE CURSED MUTANT, SCOTT SUMMERS...
...AT THE VERY MOMENT MY PLANS TO FREE THIS PLANET FROM THE GENETIC GARBAGE KNOWN AS MUTANTS SEEMED WITHIN MY GRASP.
NEVER FEAR, MY ALTER EGO...
...IT IS A TEMPORARY SETBACK, AT BEST.
CONSCIENCE! I DID NOT HEAR YOU ENTER.
SILENCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR EAVESDROPPING, AS EAVESDROPPING IS KEY TO TESTING THE MOOD OF ONE'S MASTER.
YOU FEAR RIGHTLY THAT MOIRA IS FREE OF OUR CONTROL.
NO DOUBT SHE AND SUMMERS ARE SEEKING AN ANTIDOTE TO RETRIBUTION.
PERHAPS THEY ARE SEEKING HELP FROM X-FACTOR... OR THE AVENGERS...
SUPER HEROES CAN BE SO CLIQUE-ISH.
YOU TRY MY PATIENCE, CONSCIENCE.
I AM WELL AWARE OF WHAT YOU SAY.
AS I AM AWARE THAT SUMMERS HAS EVER BEEN THE BANE OF MY EXISTENCE.
THEN, LET YOUR CONSCIENCE BE YOUR GUIDE.
FOR IS THAT NOT WHY YOU CREATED ME FROM YOUR ENGRAMS? TO EASE YOUR LONELINESS, TO HELP SHOULDER YOUR BURDEN?
I SAID IT WAS ONLY A SETBACK, AND I SPEAK TRUTH.
I SHALL TAKE CARE OF THE GOOD DOCTOR AND SUMMERS.

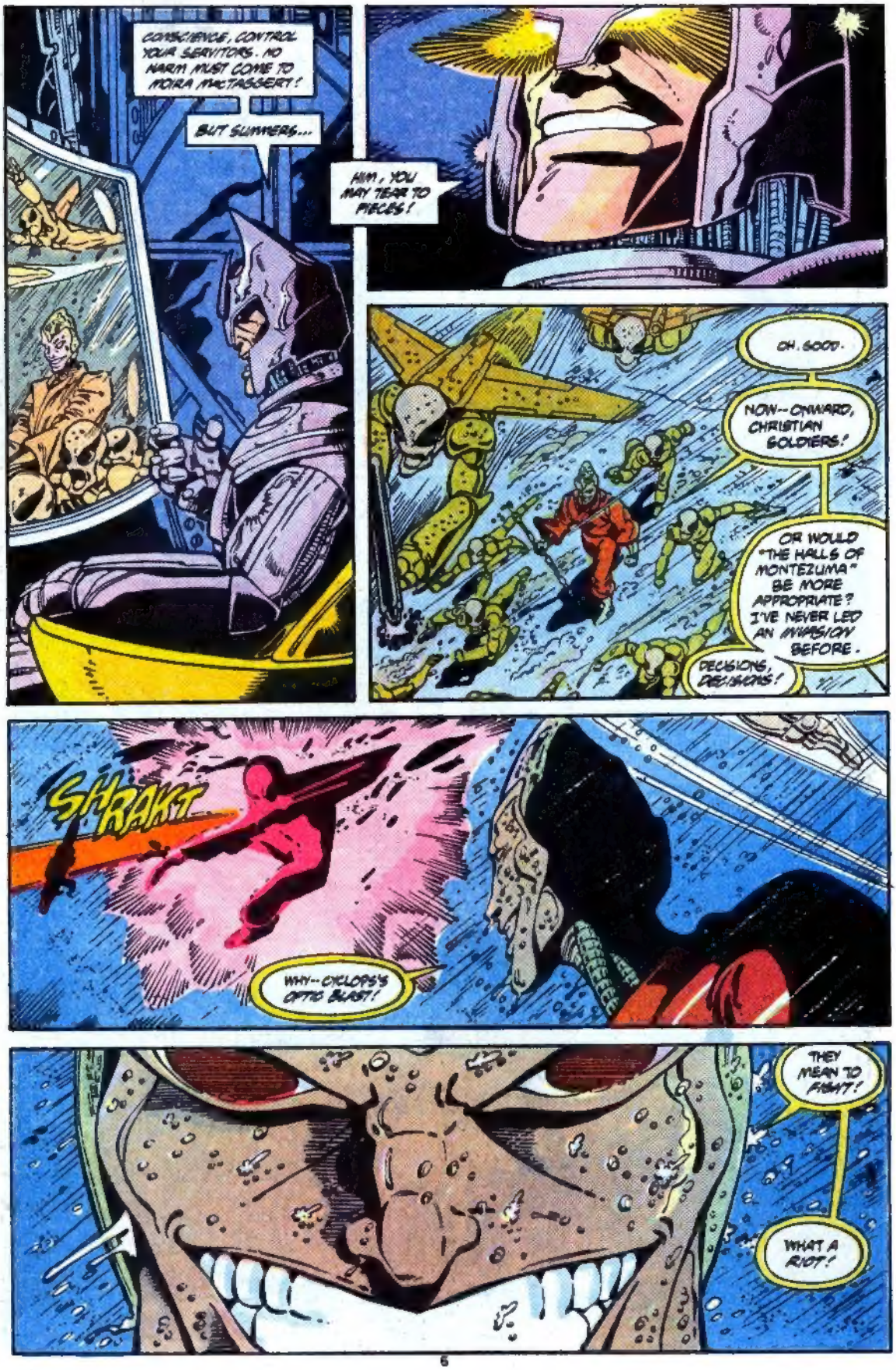
MUIR ISLAND...
--A SHORT WHILE LATER...
IT'S NO GOOD.
I CAN'T CONTACT X-FACTOR'S SHIP. SOMETHING'S BLOCKING THE TRANSMISSION.
WE'LL HAVE TO GO TO THE MAINLAND AND TRY THERE.
NO GO, SUMMERS.
ONLY A MADMAN WOULD CROSS THE CHANNEL IN THIS WEATHER.
BLAST IT, CALLISTO! I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE!
SPARE ME THE HISTRIONICS, HERO.
THINK OF MOIRA. WORKING LIKE A WOMAN POSSESSED IN HER LAB... TRYING TO OVERCOME THE GUILT OF WHAT SHE'S DONE. TRYING TO FIND A CURE.
BUT SHE CAN'T DO IT ALONE! TOO MUCH IS AT STAKE! THE BEAST IS A GENETICIST.
HE CAN... HE...
...HEEEEEEEE
SUMMERS, WHAT'S WRONG?!
DIZZY... MUST NEED SOME SHUTEYE.
I'M OKAY.
IF ONLY THAT WERE TRUE, SCOTTIE.

BUT YOU HAVE THE VIRUS.
LIKE SEAN AND LITTLE MARY.
YOU'RE DYING, SCOTT. AND IT'S MY FAULT.
MOIRA...
THE MASTER MOLD USED ME. HE WARPED MY PURPOSE AS A SCIENTIST. HE PERVERTED EVERY IDEAL I HOLD SACRED.
I CREATED A LETHAL, INCREDIBLY INFECTIOUS DISEASE DESIGNED SOLELY TO KILL MUTANTS.
AND YOU, MY FINE BOY, WERE EXPOSED.
THEN... I HAVE IT, TOO.
HOW LONG DO WE HAVE?
A FEW DAYS... PERHAPS LESS.
STEPHEN LANG WAS ALWAYS A MADMAN. MORE SO WHEN HE BECAME THE MASTER MOLD.
BUT THIS--! WHO COULD WANT TO EXTERMINATE AN ENTIRE PEOPLE...
...JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE BORN DIFFERENT?
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, CYCLOPS...
...THEIR NAME IS LEGION.


I SHOULD HAVE STOPPED THIS!
I'M YOUR BODYGUARD, MOIRA-- I FAILED YOU!
THERE WAS NOTHING YOU COULD DO, CAL.
YOU WERE RENDERED UNCONSCIOUS EVERYTIME I WAS ABDUCTED--JUST LIKE SEAN.
MASTER MOLD'S VERY THOROUGH.

BA-RA-NG
BUT THIS TIME, THEY HAVEN'T COME LIKE THIEVES IN THE NIGHT...
YOU SEE? HE WANTS ME BACK. I'M A LOOSE END.
SOMEONE'S CANDIED ON THE ISLAND.

"...MAYBE WE CAN PAY THEM BACK!"
ALL RIGHT, KIDDIES--
LET'S PARTY!


CONSCIENCE, CONTROL YOUR SERVITORS. NO HARM MUST COME TO MOIRA MACTAGGERT!
BUT SUMMERS...
HIM, YOU MAY TEAR TO PIECES!
OH. GOOD.
NOW--ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!
OR WOULD "THE HALLS OF MONTEZUMA" BE MORE APPROPRIATE? I'VE NEVER LED AN INVASION BEFORE.
DECISIONS, DECISIONS!
SHRAKT
WHY--CYCLOPS'S OPTIC BLAST!
THEY MEAN TO FIGHT!
WHAT A RIOT!

THERE MUST BE HUNDREDS OF THEM, CYCLOPS!
TZAT
SHRAKK
THEY'RE THE SAME ARTIFICIAL LIFE FORMS THAT ATTACKED ME AT THE HOSPITAL!
THEY'RE IMPERVIOUS TO PAIN!
... BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR OPTIC BEAMS ARE DOING MOST OF THE DAMAGE!
FLAT
SHRAKK
THE ONLY WAY TO STOP THEM IS TO BLOW 'EM TO PIECES!
MY PLEASURE, SUMMERS...
THEN I'LL KEEP POURING IT ON...
... ONLY...
... I ...
... CAN'T...
SUMMERS, WHAT'S WRONG!?
MY... BEAM... WEAKENING...
... THE VIRUS...
NO...

GAL!
TOO MANY! SHEER NUMBERS-- CRUSHING US!
YO, BOZOS-- --ARE YOU GOING TO COME QUIETLY OR DO ME AN' THE BOYS GOTTA GET ROUGH?
WHAT IN THE NAME OF ALL THAT'S HOLY ARE YOU?
DOC, I DON'T KNOW FROM "HOLY!"
I ONLY KNOW ABOUT HATE AND REVENGE...
...AGAINST YOUR FILTHY KIND...
...AND AGAINST THIS SCUM IN PARTICULAR.
SCOTT SUMMERS, WHO KILLED ME AS BOTH A MAN AND A SENTINEL...
...AND, MY OH MY, IS HE GOING TO PAY!
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear." —Mark Twain

PANTHER QUEST

PART III
STARRING
THE BLACK PANTHER

THE DIRT WITH ALL THE CONCENTRATION THAT MIGHT PREOCCUPY A PALEONTOLOGIST.

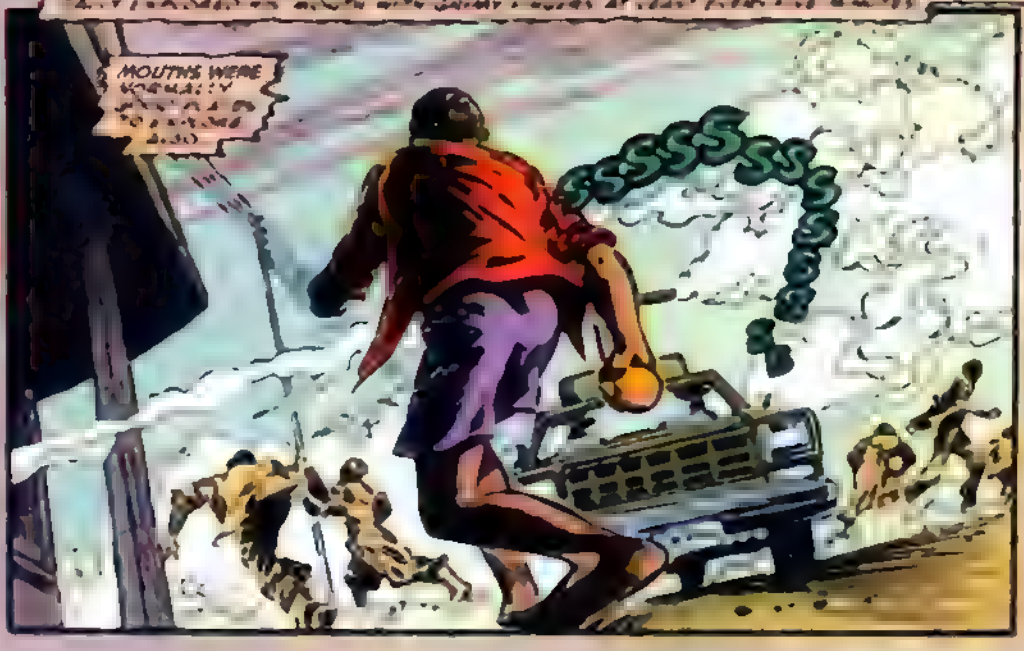
THE DIRT IS HIS PRIVATE HOARDE; THERE IS NO TELLING WHAT THE POSSIBILITIES OF A HANDFUL OF DIRT MIGHT BE.

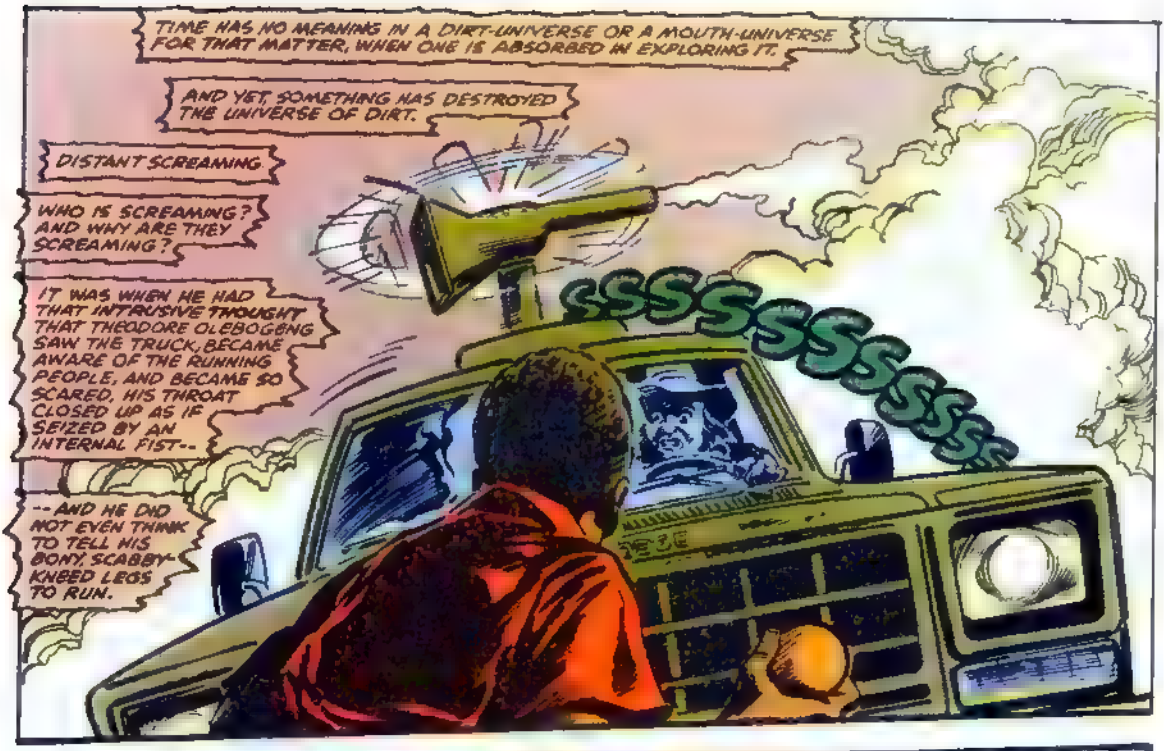
YOU CAN THROW IT IN THE AIR AND WATCH IT FLY AWAY FROM YOU--

--OR ON A WINDY DAY, HAVE IT WHIP RIGHT BACK IN YOUR EYES, A DELIGHTFUL DIRT SHOWER.

OR BUILD AND SHAPE

MOUTHS WERE



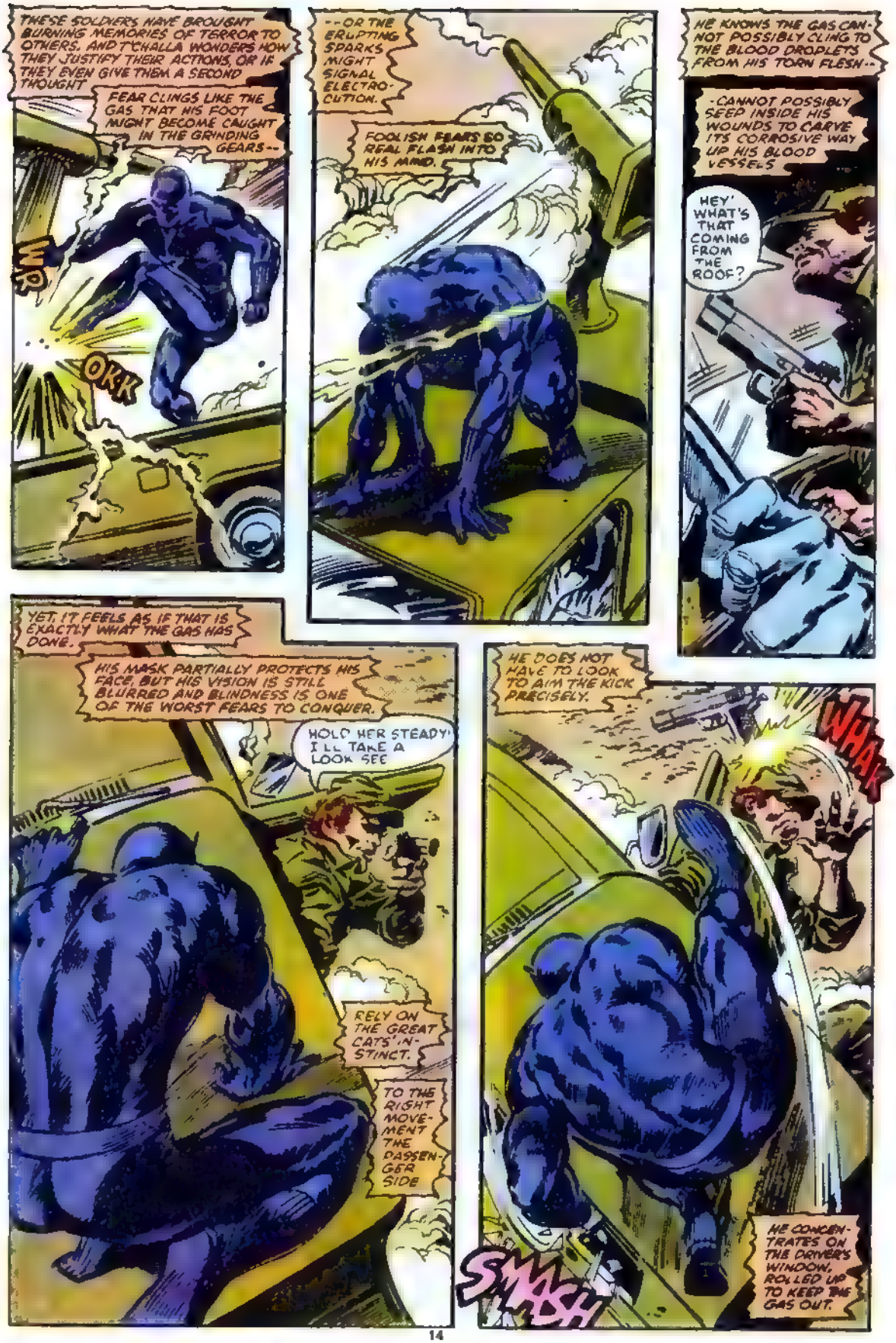

TIME HAS NO MEANING IN A DIRT-UNIVERSE OR A MOUTH-UNIVERSE FOR THAT MATTER, WHEN ONE IS ABSORBED IN EXPLORING IT.
AND YET SOMETHING HAS DESTROYED THE UNIVERSE OF DIRT.
DISTANT SCREAMING
WHO IS SCREAMING? AND WHY ARE THEY SCREAMING?
IT WAS WHEN HE HAD THAT INTRUSIVE THOUGHT THAT THEODORE OLEBOGENG SAW THE TRUCK, BECAME AWARE OF THE RUNNING PEOPLE, AND BECAME SO SCARED, HIS THROAT CLOSED UP AS IF SEIZED BY AN INTERNAL FIST--
--AND HE DID NOT EVEN THINK TO TELL HIS BONY, SCABBY-KNEED LEGS TO RUN.
TSSSSSSSSS

THE TRUCK IS LIKE A LARGE AND TERRIFYING MONSTER, WHICH MAKES HIM FORGET HOW TO BREATHE OR SWALLOW.
HATRED
UNDER
TEARS
THEODORE OLEBOGENG DOES NOT EVEN SEE THE MIDNIGHT-BLUE FIGURE THAT HURTLES THROUGH THE WINDOW WITH SUPERB TIMING--
--TWISTING AT THE MOMENT OF CONTACT SO THAT THE SHARDS OF SHATTERING GLASS HIT MOSTLY HIS BACK AND NOT HIS FACE.

THEODORE OLEBOGENG IS STILL UNAWARE OF THE FIGURE--
--AS THE PANTHER'S ARM CATCHES HIM ABOUT THE WAIST AND KNOCKS THE WIND OUT OF HIM.
FOR SECONDS AFTERWARD, CAUGHT IN HIS MIND, IS THE SIZE OF THE MONSTER-TRUCK AND THE FACE BEHIND THE WINDSHIELD OF A WHITE SOLDIER.
HIS MOTHER HAS WARNED HIM ABOUT WHITE SOLDIERS.
SHE IS ALWAYS WARNING HIM ABOUT SOMETHING OR OTHER.
BLAP
MOSTLY, HE HEARS WHAT SHE IS SAYING, BUT THE WORDS HAVE LITTLE TO DO WITH THE SEVERAL UNIVERSES THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO HIM, INCLUDING THE DIRT-UNIVERSE.
WELL, HIS MOTHER DOES RECOGNIZE THE DIRT-UNIVERSE--
--BUT ONLY WHEN SCOLDING HIM ABOUT GETTING SO DIRTY WHILE SHE IS SCRUBBING HIM CLEAN.

THE PANTHER SPRINGS UPWARD, EYE AND HAND COORDINATED.
ONE HANDHOLD IS ALL HE NEEDS!
THE STINGING WHITE VAPOR HITS THEODORE OLEBOGEING EVERYWHERE. HIS EYES FEEL AS IF THEY ARE COVERED WITH ACID THAT EATS THEM OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS.
GOT IT!
THE INITIAL YANK THREATENS TO YANK HIS ARM FROM HIS BODY
WHAT IS THIS CRAZY MAN DOING NOW?
TEARS SPILL BUT DO NOT DILUTE THE ACID OR PAIN.
OLEBOGEING'S FLESH IS AFLAME UNDER HIS CLOTHES. THOUSANDS OF NEEDLES PUNISHING HIS BODY.
THE SIX-YEAR OLD PANICS. SURE THEY ARE KILLING HIM.
THE BLACK CAT IS AFRAID OF HEALING WOUNDS RIPPING ANEW--
--OF FRESH BLOOD COVERING OLD
DID I NOT JUST TRY TO HEAL HIS WOUNDS WITH MY OWN HANDS ONLY LAST NIGHT?
HE HAS NO RESPECT FOR MY EFFORTS.

HIS MOTHER HAD BEEN RIGHT!
HOW COULD HE KNOW SHE WAS RIGHT?
STOP RUNNING, BOY!
I SAID "STOP"
WHUP
IT IS ANGER THAT TRAMPLES T'CHALLA'S FEAR AND KEEPS HIM STRIVING FORWARD TO THE CENTER OF THE HISSING GAS.
COME BACK, BOY! DON'T RUN THAT WAY!
THE GAS FINDS T'CHALLA'S HEALING BARBED WIRE GASHES FIRST--
--STABS INTO THE MEAT-CENTER OF EACH RAZORED WOUND.
THE GAS IS ALL ABOUT HIM, A SWIRLING ASSAULT, AND HIS FEAR INTENSIFIES, TEARS DROWNING HIS ANGER.
OLEBOGENG IS CERTAIN THE CLEAN-SHAVEN, WHITE FACE BEHIND THE WINDSHIELD CAME TO KILL HIM WITH THIS GAS.
--THAT SEARS UP HIS NOSTRILS REACHING FOR HIS BRAIN.
IT'S GOING TO EAT HIS BRAIN UP!
NO MATTER WHERE HE RUNS, THE GAS-CREATURE CONTINUES TO DEVOUR HIM.
IT WANTS HIM BECAUSE HE DID NOT LISTEN TO HIS MOTHER.
DON'T BREATHE! TRY NOT TO BREATHE.
YOU HAVE KICKED AT THE MECHANISM, BUT IT WILL NOT BREAK.
LET IT GO! YOU HAVE DONE WHAT YOU CAN!
WROKK
THEY WOULD HAVE RUN OVER THE CHILD.
HE DOES NOT EVEN THINK THEY MEANT TO PURPOSELY HIT THE BOY, BUT ACCIDENT OR NOT, THE YOUTH WOULD STILL BE DEAD!
DON'T LET GO!
WROK


THESE SOLDIERS HAVE BROUGHT BURNING MEMORIES OF TERROR TO OTHERS. AND T'CHALLA WONDERS HOW THEY JUSTIFY THEIR ACTIONS, OR IF THEY EVEN GIVE THEM A SECOND THOUGHT
FEAR CLINGS LIKE THE GAS THAT HIS FOOT MIGHT BECOME CAUGHT IN THE GRINDING GEARS--
WP
OKK
--OR THE ERUPTING SPARKS MIGHT SIGNAL ELECTRO-CUTION.
FOOLISH FEARS SO REAL FLASH INTO HIS MIND.
HE KNOWS THE GAS CANNOT POSSIBLY CLING TO THE BLOOD DROPLETS FROM HIS TORN FLESH--
-CANNOT POSSIBLY SEEP INSIDE HIS WOUNDS TO CARVE ITS CORROSIVE WAY UP HIS BLOOD VESSELS
HEY! WHAT'S THAT COMING FROM THE ROOF?
YET, IT FEELS AS IF THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THE GAS HAS DONE.
HIS MASK PARTIALLY PROTECTS HIS FACE, BUT HIS VISION IS STILL BLURRED AND BLINDNESS IS ONE OF THE WORST FEARS TO CONQUER.
HOLD HER STEADY! I'LL TAKE A LOOK SEE
RELY ON THE GREAT CATS' INSTINCT.
TO THE RIGHT MOVEMENT THE PASSENGER SIDE
HE DOES NOT HAVE TO LOOK TO AIM THE KICK PRECISELY.
WHAK
SMASH
HE CONCENTRATES ON THE DRIVER'S WINDOW, ROLLED UP TO KEEP THE GAS OUT.

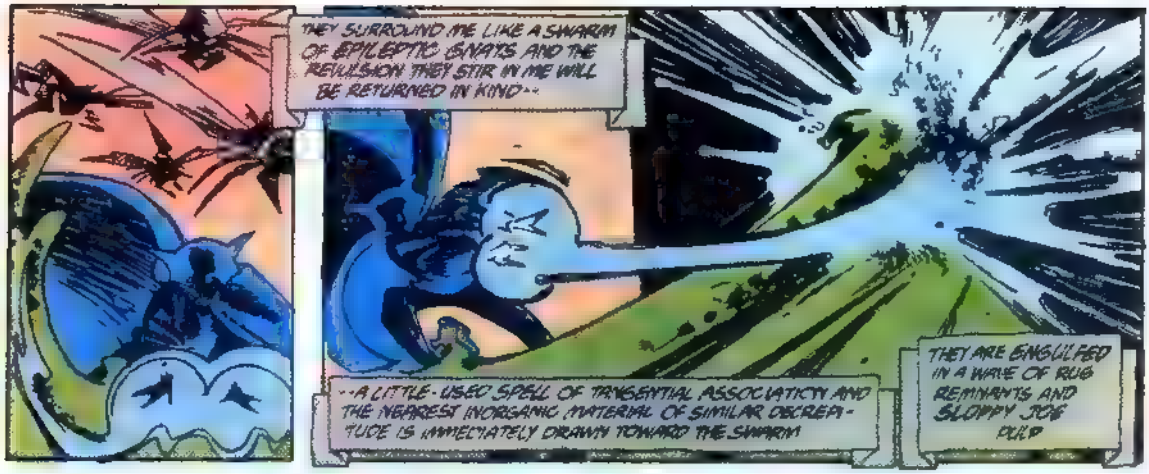
THERE IS FEAR ON THE MAN'S FACE. T'CHALLA KNOWS, UNDER HIS MASK, IS A SIMILAR LOOK ON HIS OWN.
DID YOU SEE THE FEAR IN THE LITTLE BOY'S EYES? FEAR LIKE YOUR OWN--
--THE FEAR OF DEATH THAT SHOUTS OF LIFE.
WARM STREAMS OF BLOOD FLOWING UP HIS ARM.
KEEP THE FEAR DOWN. DID THE GLASS CUT A MAJOR ARTERY?
HE HAS NO TIME TO PREPARE FOR THE CRASH.
ALL FEAR OF FEAR GAS DISINTEGRATING VESSELS OR SEVERED ARTERIES ARE VIOLENTLY ANNIHILATED BY NEW FEAR.
CRRAAASSSH
I'LL LISTEN!
I'LL LISTEN, I PROMISE, MOMMA!
LISTEN TO WHAT? I AM NOT YOUR MOMMA, BOY! NOW BE STILL!
YOU KEEP RUNNING INTO THE GAS!
IT'S EATING MY BRAIN... ALL UP!
AND MY EYEBALLS! I'VE GOT NO EYEBALLS LEFT! AWWW!
YES YOU DO.
NO! I DON'T AWWW!
IT... ATE 'EM ...UP!
NO, IT DIDN'T.
YES! IT DID! I SHOULD KNOW.
IT'S MY EYEBALLS.

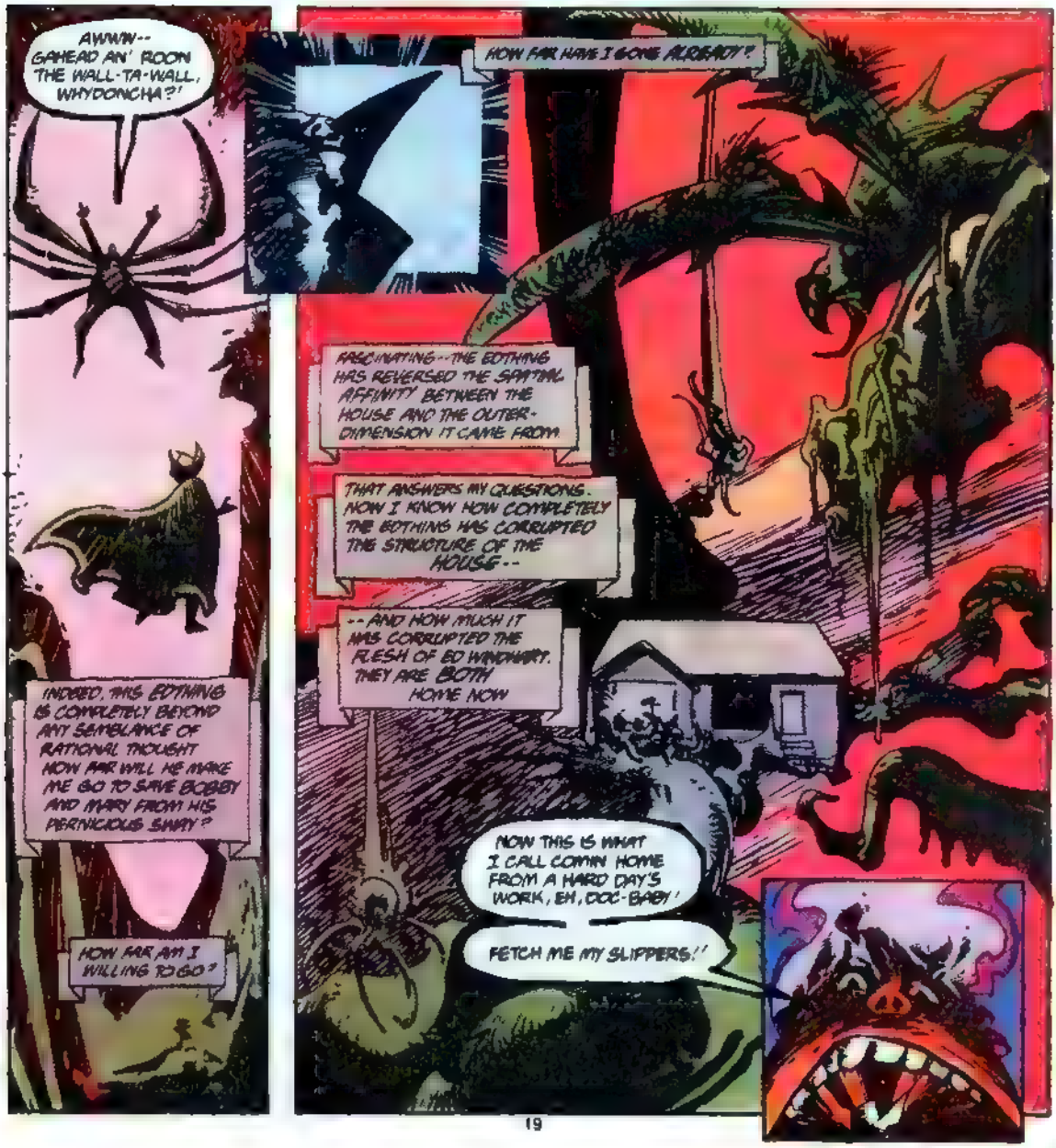
WHEN THE WORLD BECOMES STABLE, THE FIRST IMAGE THAT COMES INTO FOCUS IS ZANTI WITH THE CHILD--
--AND EVEN FROM A DISTANCE HE CAN SEE PANIC AND HORROR--
--CHANGE UNDER THE TEARS TO HATRED.
THE LONG MOMENTS OF THE AGONY AND FEAR IN THIS AFTERNOON WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF THIS CHILD'S LIFE.
THE HATRED MAY BE MOMENTARY NOW--
--BUT COULD TURN TO LIFELONG BITTER, VIOLENT RAGE
SUCH EMOTION, ETCHED LIKE SCARS IN YOUNG EYES, DISHEARTENS T'CHALLA
HE HARDLY SEES ANYTHING ELSE ON THAT NOON-DAY STREET. THAT CHILD'S EYES WILL REMAIN WITH HIM--
CLICK
--THE WAY THE HURT AND MUTE FURY OF THE FIRST SOLDIER HE DEFENDED HIMSELF AGAINST HAS STAYED.
A TERRIBLE NAKED LOOK IN EYES THAT WILL TAKE MORE THAN WORDS --
KA-CHOK!
--TO HEAL

CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE...

the
FLAWED
FLESH
I AM
DOCTOR STRANGE
NIGHTMARE IN SUBURBIA PART 2
I am in MINERVA OHIO. FOR THE FIRST--AND I HOPE--THE LAST TIME
HONEEEEY--ARE YOU HAVING AN AFFAIR BEHIND MY BACK WITH THE BALLET STAR?
OH, GOD--MR STRANGE--WHAT IS IT?
IT IS YOUR HUSBAND, MRS. WINDHART
A MAN WHO HAS ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BECOME COMPLETELY VIOLATED BY A MINOR DEMON.
THIS WILLING PARTICIPATION IN THE DEMON'S PERVERSIONS HAD ALSO CAUSED THE CORRUPTION OF THE WINDHART'S SON, BOBBY, AND THEIR HOUSE
YER DOC STRANGE, RIGHT?
PLEASED TO MEETCHA--CALL ME..
BLOUP
..ED
NOW GET YER PANSY PAWS OFF MY WIFE"
AAAGH--
STEPHEN--HELP!
YES, THAT IS WHY I CAME HERE, AFTER ALL--TO HELP THIS POOR FAMILY EVEN IF IT MEANS HELPING THEM TO FALL APART.

A SIMPLE ADDITION TO THE SPELL CURRENTLY PROTECTING BOBBY...
.. AND MARY WILL ALSO BE UNDER THE WOMB-LIKE COMFORT OF..
--THE CRIMSON BANDS OF CYTORRAK.
OKAY THEN--
--LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!
THAT THEN SHOULD LEAVE ME FREE TO ADDRESS THE MATTER AT HAND.
ED MANCHART, LAWYER--AGGRESSIVE, ARROGANT, CONCEITED. SO OVERWHELMED WITH THE DESIRE FOR SUCCESS, THAT HE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE ANYTHING TO ATTAIN IT
REMINDS ME OF SOMEONE I KNEW ONCE...
HEY DOC--LOOK--THE RED ONES ARE BACK!"
THE CANDIES BECOME SCREECHING PROJECTILES--
--THE COLORED COATING, IN TURN, BECOMES A SHELL MORE IN KEEPING WITH THE DEFINITION--
--THE SHELLS CRACK, LIKE PESTILENT EGGS, SPAWNING...
HEY GUYS
LET'S BUZZ
HIS FACE
AND EAT
HIS TONGUE!!

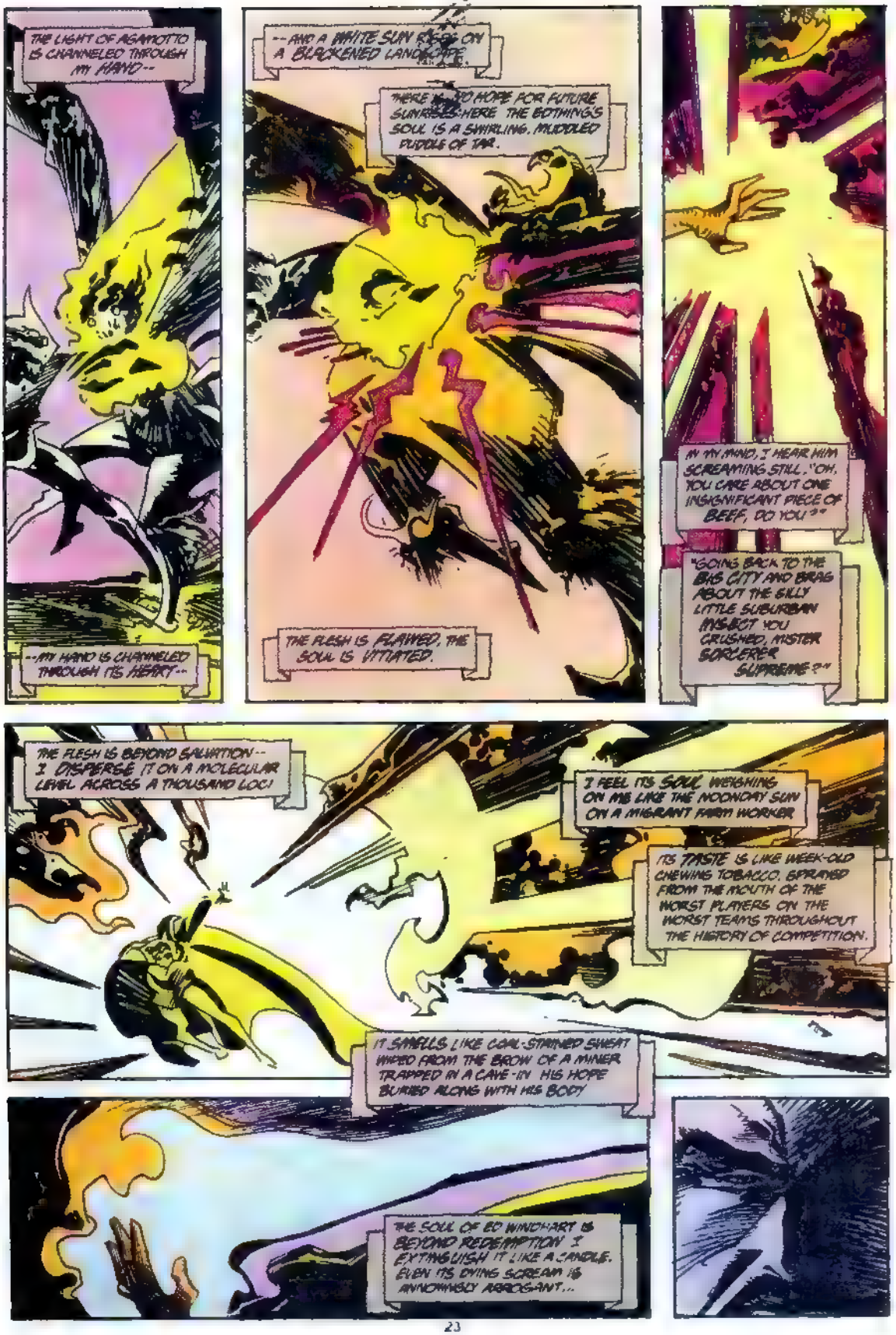

THEY SURROUND ME LIKE A SWARM OF EPILEPTIC GNATS AND THE REVULSION THEY STIR IN ME WILL BE RETURNED IN KIND--
--A LITTLE-USED SPELL OF TANGENTIAL ASSOCIATICITY AND THE NEAREST INORGANIC MATERIAL OF SIMILAR DECREPITUDE IS IMMEDIATELY DRAWN TOWARD THE SWARM
THEY ARE ENGULFED IN A WAVE OF RUG REMNANTS AND SLOPPY JOE PULP


AWWW-- GAHEAD AN' ROON THE WALL-TA-WALL, WHYDONCHA?!
HOW FAR HAVE I GONE ALREADY?
FASCINATING--THE EOTHING HAS REVERSED THE SPATIAL AFFINITY BETWEEN THE HOUSE AND THE OUTER-DIMENSION IT CAME FROM
THAT ANSWERS MY QUESTIONS. NOW I KNOW HOW COMPLETELY THE EOTHING HAS CORRUPTED THE STRUCTURE OF THE HOUSE--
--AND HOW MUCH IT HAS CORRUPTED THE FLESH OF ED WINDWARY. THEY ARE BOTH HOME NOW
INDEED, THIS EOTHING IS COMPLETELY BEYOND ANY SEMBLANCE OF RATIONAL THOUGHT HOW FAR WILL HE MAKE ME GO TO SAVE BOBBY AND MARY FROM HIS PERNICIOUS SWAY?
HOW FAR AM I WILLING TO GO?
NOW THIS IS WHAT I CALL COMIN HOME FROM A HARD DAY'S WORK, EH, DOC-BABY!
FETCH ME MY SLIPPERS!!

STAY AWAY FROM YOUR WIFE AND CHILD.
I MUST ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH MARY SHE MUST KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO AND I NEED TO BE CERTAIN BEFORE I DO IT
SHOOOR--KEEP ME AWAY FROM THE LI'L WOMAN--HEAR IT ALL THE TIME--
MARY?
MR. STRANGE? STEPHEN--WHAT'S ED--?
AND IT IS THAT SIMPLE.
A SWEEP THROUGH THE CORNERS IN THE CORNERS OF HER MIND, WHERE EVEN THE MOST RESOLUTE OF HOUSE-WIVES REFUSES TO DUST, PROVIDES ME WITH THE ANSWERS I NEED TO KNOW
WHERE THE DIRT AND GRIME GROWS THICKEST AND BLACKEST--THAT IS WHERE ALL THOUGHTS OF ED NOW RESIDE IN MARY'S MIND.
--HEADACHE, BACKACHE, LONG DAY, TOO HOT, TOO COLD, TOO TIRED...
...ALL RIGHT--YOU KNOW--
AN' WE LIKE IT BETTER THIS WAY!!
--YOU KNOW!?
HIS RAGE CATCHES ME OFF GUARD AFTER FEELING THE SADNESS OF MARY'S MOST INTIMATE THOUGHTS.
SPITTLE AND MUCUS FLING FROM HIS MOUTH, HOVERING AND TAKING ORBIT AROUND EDTHING'S HEAD LIKE PLANETS IN ETERNAL WORSHIP AROUND A BLACK SUN...

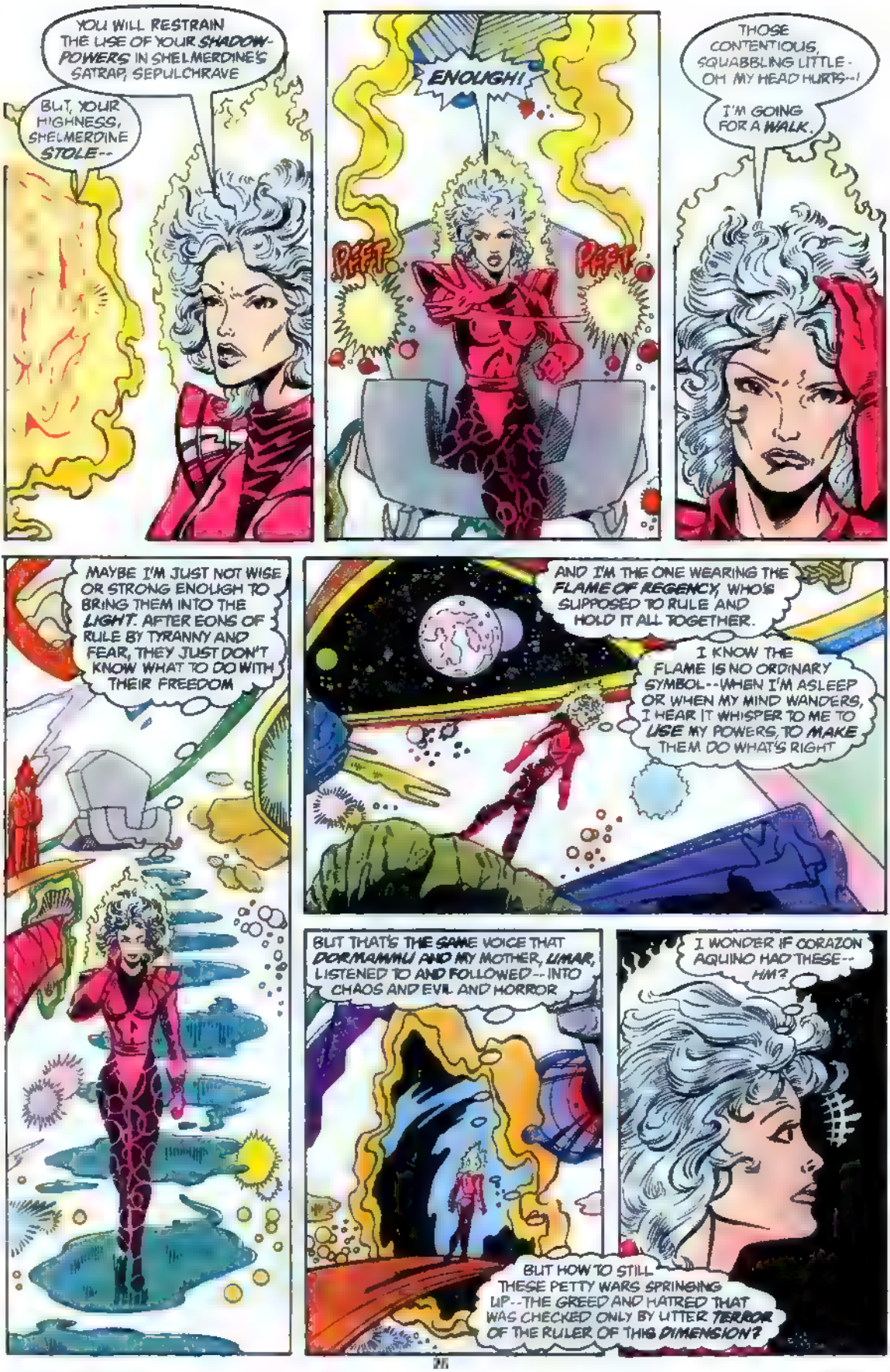
Y'know I'm bad--I'm bad--
you know it--I'm bad
...AND MY LACK OF DISCIPLINE HAS FURTHERED HIS PRETENSIONS OF SUCCESS AGAINST ME
DOGPILE ON THE DOCTOR, DOGPILE ON THE DOCTOR!
I MUST REGAIN MY COMPOSURE.
THE SURROUNDINGS HAVE SURPRISED AND UNNERVED ME-- TO SEE A HUMAN PSYCHE SO WILLINGLY VIOLATED IS ... DISHEARTENING AND...
You talk too much you worry me to death
ENOUGH IF ED WINDHART IS UNWILLING TO CLEANSE HIS VIOLATED SOUL, THEN IT MUST BE DONE FOR HIM BY...
HEY, IS THAT THE EYE OF YAPHET KOTTO?
...THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO
AN EYE WHICH SEES ONLY THE LIGHT OF INNOCENCE AND HOPE...
HEY, DID STARSKY AND HUTCH HAVE ANY LYRICS TO THEIR THEME SONG? HOW ABOUT S.W.A.T?

. AND REFLECTS THAT SAVING GRACE BACK ON TO ITS BEARER, NO MATTER HOW DIM THAT LIGHT MAY BE'
WE'RE TALKIN' 20-WATT BULB HERE, DOC"
YES, WE ARE
IT STINKS AND IT STINKS, TOO!
HEY, PAPARAZZI--GET THAT SPOTLIGHT OFFA ME!!
THE STENCH IS THE DEMON'S FOUL AURA BEING CAST IN THE LIGHT OF TRUTH...
...THE STINK IS ITS FOUL FLESH BEING BLACKED BY THE SAVE.
TURN IT OFF--
--PLEASE--
A FLEA? FROM THE ALL-POWERFUL EDTHING"
I'M SURPRISED BUT MERCY IS A HUMAN TRAIT, EDTHING.
SO BEFORE IT IS BESTOWED UPON YOU, I MUST SEE IF THERE IS ANY HUMANITY LEFT WORTHY OF THE ACT!
GLARCK-PFFT!


THE LIGHT OF AGAMOTTO IS CHANNELED THROUGH MY HAND--
--MY HAND IS CHANNELED THROUGH ITS HEART--
--AND A WHITE SUN RISES ON A BLACKENED LANDSCAPE.
THERE IS NO HOPE FOR FUTURE SUNRISES: HERE THE BOTHING'S SOUL IS A SWIRLING, MUDDLED PUDDLE OF TAR.
THE FLESH IS FLAWED, THE SOUL IS VITIATED.
IN MY MIND, I HEAR HIM SCREAMING STILL. "OH, YOU CARE ABOUT ONE INSIGNIFICANT PIECE OF BEEF, DO YOU?"
"GOING BACK TO THE BIG CITY AND BRAG ABOUT THE SILLY LITTLE SUBURBAN INSECT YOU CRUSHED, MISTER SORCERER SUPREME?"
THE FLESH IS BEYOND SALVATION-- I DISPERSE IT ON A MOLECULAR LEVEL ACROSS A THOUSAND LOCI
I FEEL ITS SOUL WEIGHING ON ME LIKE THE NOONDAY SUN ON A MIGRANT FARM WORKER
ITS TASTE IS LIKE WEEK-OLD CHEWING TOBACCO, SPRAYED FROM THE MOUTH OF THE WORST PLAYERS ON THE WORST TEAMS THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF COMPETITION.
IT SMELLS LIKE COAL-STAINED SWEAT WIPED FROM THE BROW OF A MINER TRAPPED IN A CAVE-IN. HIS HOPE BURIED ALONG WITH HIS BODY
THE SOUL OF ED WINDHART IS BEYOND REDEMPTION. I EXTINGUISH IT LIKE A CANDLE. EVEN ITS DYING SCREAM IS ANNOYINGLY ARROGANT...

I DID WHAT I COULD IT SIMPLY WASN'T ENOUGH.
I RETURN THE HOUSE TO ITS PROPER DESIGNATION, FREE OF THE MALIGNANT INSTITUTIONS.
EVERYTHING IS AS IT SHOULD BE EVERYTHING IS BACK TO NORMAL.
I AM SORRY, MRS WINDHART I WAS ABLE TO REDEEM YOUR SON AND THIS STRUCTURE, BUT...
BUT NOTHING WILL EVER BE NORMAL FOR THE WINDHARTS AGAIN
THEY FELT EVERYTHING THAT OCCURRED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF MY CONFRONTATION WITH ED
THEY FELT HIS ANGER, GREED AND PETTY INSECURITIES, MAGNIFIED TO A CONTEMPTIBLE DEGREE.
THEY FELT ME DESTROY HIM
MISTER STRANGE--STEPHEN--I WANT TO... THANK YOU--
...UHM,... THANK YOU FOR COMING... THANK YOU FOR TRYING...
...THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY SON'S LIFE...
MARY... I--I'M SORRY...
I REMEMBER HOW ED LOOKED ON OUR WEDDING DAY. HE LOOKED GOOD-- YOUNG... INNOCENT--
--I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THAT MEMORY, TOO...
AND WHAT LITTLE I COULD SAVE OF ED. I DID
END.

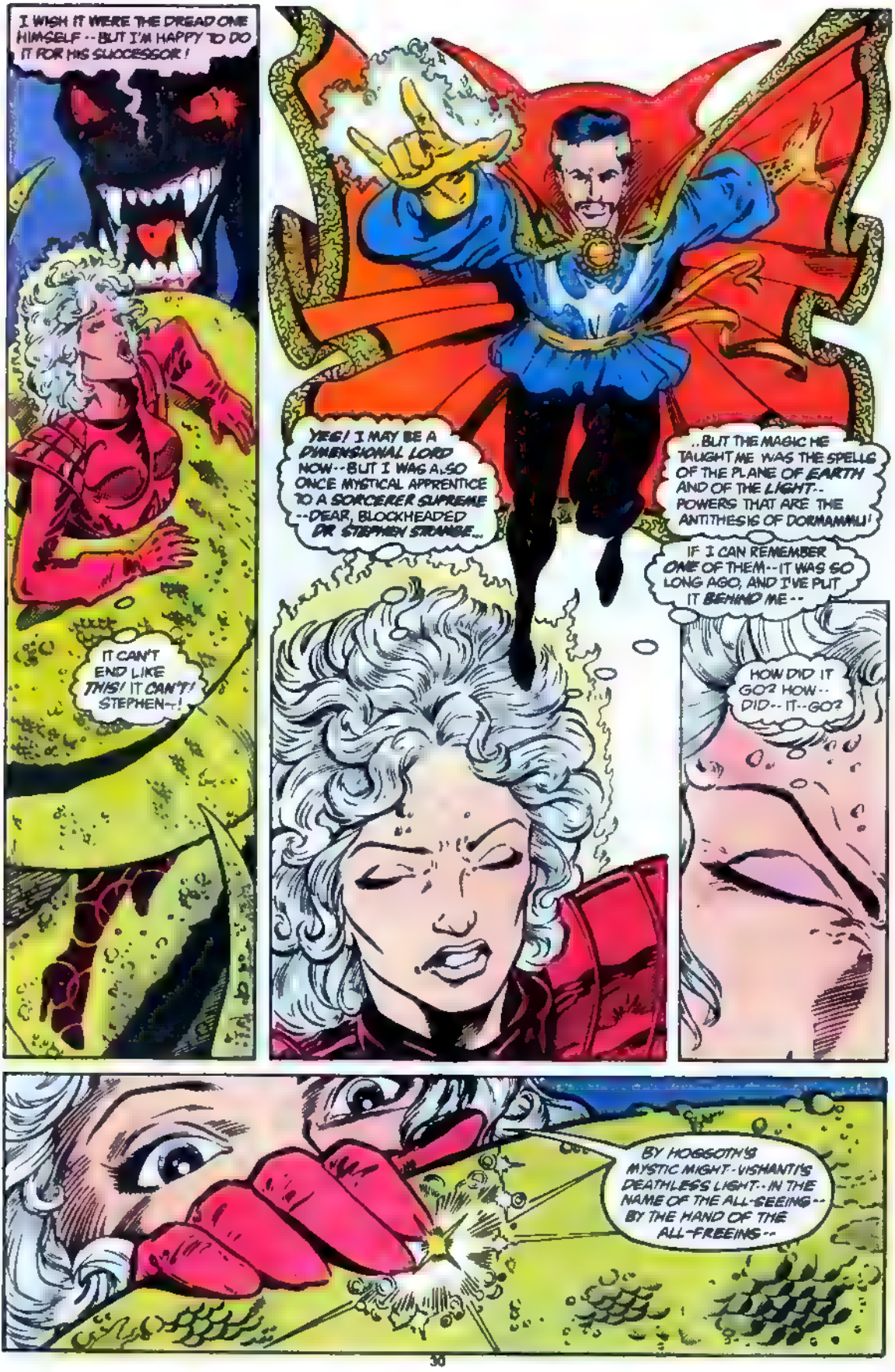
CLEA
"AT THE BOTTOM OF MY GARDEN!"
SEPULCHRAVE INTRUDES ON MY AUTHORITY, O WISE CLEA! HIS SHADOWS SAP THE PRODUCTIVITY OF MY PEOPLE WITH THEIR TERROR! THE DARK DIMENSION CANNOT FUNCTION WHEN SUCH HIGH-HANDEDNESS PREVAILS!
I BUT REASSERT THE RIGHTS SHELMERDINE SURREPTITIOUSLY APPROPRIATED DURING THE INTERREGNUM, MOST REVERED RULER!


YOU WILL RESTRAIN THE USE OF YOUR SHADOW-POWERS IN SHELMERDINE'S SATRAP, SEPULCHRAVE
BUT, YOUR HIGHNESS, SHELMERDINE STOLE--
ENOUGH!
PSHT
PSHT
THOSE CONTENTIOUS, SQUABBLING LITTLE - OH MY HEAD HURTS--!
I'M GOING FOR A WALK.
MAYBE I'M JUST NOT WISE OR STRONG ENOUGH TO BRING THEM INTO THE LIGHT. AFTER EONS OF RULE BY TYRANNY AND FEAR, THEY JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEIR FREEDOM
AND I'M THE ONE WEARING THE FLAME OF REGENCY, WHO'S SUPPOSED TO RULE AND HOLD IT ALL TOGETHER.
I KNOW THE FLAME IS NO ORDINARY SYMBOL--WHEN I'M ASLEEP OR WHEN MY MIND WANDERS, I HEAR IT WHISPER TO ME TO USE MY POWERS, TO MAKE THEM DO WHAT'S RIGHT
BUT THAT'S THE SAME VOICE THAT DORMAMMU AND MY MOTHER, UMAR, LISTENED TO AND FOLLOWED -- INTO CHAOS AND EVIL AND HORROR
I WONDER IF CORAZON AQUINO HAD THESE-- HIM?
BUT HOW TO STILL THESE PETTY WARS SPRINGING UP--THE GREED AND HATRED THAT WAS CHECKED ONLY BY UTTER TERROR OF THE RULER OF THIS DIMENSION?

THIS IS NO PART OF THE DARK DIMENSION THAT I'VE EVER SEEN-- NONE THAT EVEN THE SCROLLS SPEAK OF!
SHOULD HAVE WATCHED WHAT PORTALS I WALKED THROUGH...!
MAYBE I'VE STRAYED FROM MY REALM INTO ANOTHER ONE ENTIRELY?
HM, NO--MY POWERS REMAIN AT THEIR PEAK THEN WHERE--?
DIDN'T SEE THAT DOOR AT FIRST--WHICH MEANS MY PRESENCE MAY HAVE CAUSED IT TO REVEAL ITSELF. WELL, THEN, IF IT'S TO BE A MYSTERY--
OPEN! THE MISTRESS OF THE DARK DIMENSION COMMANDS IT!
I SAID OPEN!
NO POWER IN THIS UNIVERSE CAN STAND AGAINST THE WEARER OF THE FLAME!
ZOOM
NONE!

A--GARDEN?
LONG OVERGROWN--BUT WITH A PROTECTIVE SHIELD LYING IN THE MIDDLE OF IT--!
THEN LET THE BARRIER BE DISSOLVED, AND THE MYSTERY STAND FORTH!
ZWEEE
AS YOU COMMAND, THE MYSTERY WILL STAND FORTH--BUT I AM THE BARRIER, AND YOU SHALL DIE RATHER THAN BREAK ME!
THE LORD DORMAMMU CREATED ME AGES AGO--POWERFUL ENOUGH TO STOP ALL INTRUDERS, LITTLE GIRL!
I'M NO "LITTLE GIRL," WORM! I HAVE REPLACED DORMAMMU, AND TAKEN HIS POWER--SO STAND ASIDE!
YOU MISUNDERSTAND ME, LITTLE GIRL. I WAS CREATED TO BE PROOF AGAINST ALL--ESPECIALLY DORMAMMU HIMSELF!

HUUUSH!
THIS IS INSANE!
I'M HITTING HIM WITH EVERYTHING I HAVE--AND IT DOESN'T EVEN SLOW HIM DOWN!
PZZZZZZ
BUT WHY? WHY WOULD DORMAMMU CREATE SOMETHING THAT WOULD ATTACK EVEN HIM IF HE APPROACHED IT?
ATTACK--AND DESTROY, LITTLE GIRL! DIE WITH THAT RIDDLE IN YOUR MIND!
THE FLAME OF REGENCY--IT'S FADING--!


I WISH IT WERE THE DREAD ONE HIMSELF -- BUT I'M HAPPY TO DO IT FOR HIS SUCCESSOR!
IT CAN'T END LIKE THIS! IT CAN'T! STEPHEN--!
YES! I MAY BE A DIMENSIONAL LORD NOW -- BUT I WAS ALSO ONCE MYSTICAL APPRENTICE TO A SORCERER SUPREME -- DEAR, BLOCKHEADED DR STEPHEN STRANGE...
..BUT THE MAGIC HE TAUGHT ME WAS THE SPELLS OF THE PLANE OF EARTH AND OF THE LIGHT -- POWERS THAT ARE THE ANTITHESIS OF DORMAMMU!
IF I CAN REMEMBER ONE OF THEM -- IT WAS SO LONG AGO, AND I'VE PUT IT BEHIND ME --
HOW DID IT GO? HOW -- DID -- IT -- GO?
BY HOGGOTH'S MYSTIC MIGHT - VISHANTI'S DEATHLESS LIGHT -- IN THE NAME OF THE ALL-SEEING -- BY THE HAND OF THE ALL-FREEING --

NO!
VANISH FROM MY SIGHT! FALL INTO THE NIGHT! INTO DARKNESS, OUT OF BEING!
YOU-- DEPRAVED! DEPRAVED! IF YOU ARE SO DEGENERATE TO USE SUCH FILTHY WEAPONS, YOU DESERVE THE AWFUL TREASURE!
ABOMINATION--!
OH, SHUT UP AND BEGONE!
AND THE AWFUL TREASURE--
--A FLOWER?
IT'S--BEAUTIFUL--!

OUTSIDE OF GLOWING WITH ITS OWN LIGHT, NO POWER EMANATES FROM IT--
--SIMPLY A BEAUTIFUL FLOWER?
WAS DORMAMMU--LORD OF CHAOS, POWERFUL BEYOND IMAGINING--SO SCARED OF THIS THAT HE LOCKED IT AWAY FROM ITSELF ON PAIN OF HIS OWN DEATH?
WAS THIS SOMETHING FROM THE TIME BEFORE HE BECAME LORD DORMAMMU --A MEMORY HE COULDN'T BEAR--OR SOMETHING MORE SECRET AND DEEPER STILL?
OR...
...IS IT THAT THE ONE THING MY MONSTER KINSMAN, FULL OF POWER AND DARKNESS, COULD NOT BEAR--
--WAS THE FRAGILE, SIMPLE LIGHT OF BEAUTY?
The End.

MARVEL® READERS PRESENT

Attention correspondents: All letters considered for publication must include your name and address, though we will withhold that information upon request.

Dear Presenters,

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #13 was the first issue that I felt has succeeded in presenting us with a compliment of four first-rate stories. None of the stories had the feel of "filler" stories that have been occurring as back-ups since this title began.

Colossus -- I like the theme that Ann has picked for this story comparing the life styles of the United States and the Soviet Union, and perceptions that we Americans have of the U.S.S.R. If I had to make one point of criticism, it would be that the art is a bit cartoonish and tends to downplay the seriousness of the story.

Black Panther -- Now this is the Panther of old! I have to admit that I was totally disappointed with the Panther's limited series awhile back and I felt that it was a bit political for my tastes. Colan and Palmer drawing the Panther gives the story the right feel and it is off to a very good start. Twenty-five parts, that's 200 pages of story! This looks like it will be *the* comic event for the title. I am looking forward to watching this comic epic evolve.

Mr. Fantastic and the Invisible Woman -- A very nice, light-hearted look at Sue and Reed in the suburbs. One small problem, we have seen some of the Richards' private life in the pages of the SILVER SURFER and every time we see them, their house looks different. What's the story? Did Reed build the house out of unstable molecules?

Shanna the She-Devil -- Bruce Jones just about does it all in this story and Shanna has never looked better. This story may have been the best one in the entire issue. It made me long for a Jungle Action comic. If you plan to bring back Ka-Zar and Shanna, don't put them in the silly stories that led to the downfall of the KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE title. The jungle environment would suit me just fine for future Shanna stories!

Like I said earlier, issue #13 was, in my opinion, the best issue to date, and I especially look forward to the Panther storyline which started this issue.

Charles S. Novinskie
PO Box 1323
Grand Junction, CO 81502

As you will soon see, many readers are in agreement with you on the success of the Black Panther saga so far, Charles. As for your point on the Richards' house, your guess is as good as ours on why the house always looks different. It would seem that your "unstable molecules" suggestion is the right one. Wouldn't you want a house that you'd never have to worry about? Just think, there would never be any leaks, the paint would never chip or fade, they'd never have to worry about lightning or other natural disasters, and they probably get great TV reception! Oh well, just a thought...

Dear Terry,

Thirteen is unlucky for some, but the 13th issue of MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS was your best so far. It's only a coincidence that this was the first issue not to feature the Man-Thing, as his tale was wonderfully woven by Steve Gerber. However, it was very different from the other strips in the book and, I would think, would be something less enjoyed by those mainly buying the book for the Wolverine story. It's a strip that very much deserves exposure somewhere, though. Perhaps a limited series of its own would be more suitable.

Having an X-Man lead feature clearly makes commercial sense. The Wolverine story was, I thought, nothing special. It did nothing new with the character. The Colossus story, in contrast, has shown us more of Peter Rasputin, the man, than ever before.The Colossus Graphic Novel, and his return to his homeland, are both stories promised long ago. But the latter was nicely covered in CLASSIC X-MEN, and whether or not this is the same story meant for the novel, it's long overdue. The summaries of the more and less fair aspects of the super powers were well thought out and well written, and at the same time, the mystery surrounding the family he's protecting, all of whom are most odd, is an intriguing one. Meanwhile, the combination of Rick Leonardi and P. Craig Russell's artistic talents is lovely to look at.

It's great to see Don McGregor's name on the credits again. JUNGLE ACTION was one of the better Marvel books of the '70's. At first, I thought we were in for a simple criticism of the South African apartheid system, but there's clearly much more to the story than that. T'Challa is a character whom most writers have had little idea how to use in the past but remains as a man about whom much can be said. And it's a pleasure to see Gene and Tom teamed up again. All we need now is to see Gene drawing Marv's TOMB OF DRACULA again.

Chris Henderson's name, by contrast, is new to me. But the tale of two not so ordinary citizens was very funny with much appropriately tongue-in-cheek humor. It's always a pleasant change when the more human aspects of the super-humans are explored, and we tend to forget Reed and Sue are a married couple and part of a family. I don't know if people really say "scope dem legs", but the dialogue was generally very real. Also, I enjoyed seeing Mike Harris' work again. His storytelling is excellent, and his style was perfect for this tale.

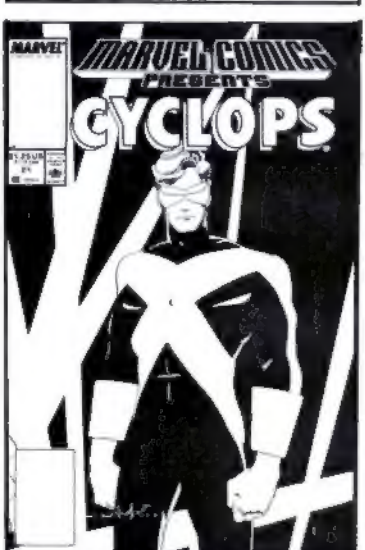
Finally, I liked Bruce Jones' little vignette very much. He's a master of the short story and whilst the twist was obvious, I think it was meant to be. It was Shanna's method of finding this out that was interesting. Meanwhile, Bruce's tendency to draw himself into stories and his liking for "good girl" art were prime motivating factors behind the art, but it just wouldn't be a proper Bruce Jones story without them and the result was high in quality.

I know Colossus and the Panther are to be continuing features, but I hope we see more of Reed and Sue Richards and of Shanna, and these types of stories, too. Take care!

Malcolm Bourne
6 Craigwell Rd.
Manchester M25 8EF
England

We'll have lots more of those stories in the future, Malcolm, especially if you and everyone else keeps telling us what you want to see. As for your other comments, you may get your wish for another TOMB OF DRACULA series in the near future by Marv, Gene, and Tom, so look for it. Also, the only person that we know of that actually uses the expression "scope dem legs" is the writer himself, Chris Henderson. It is that precise line which has made him such a popular man in the halls of Marvel these days. You should try it! Assistant Editor Mike Rockwitz does, and now everyone has more respect for him. Right, Mike?...ow...stop it...the boots hurt...Okay, we'll go on to the next letter already...

NEXT ISSUE:



TO SAVE A CHILD, THE
BLACK PANTHER®
FACES. . .
TEAR GAS!
DOCTOR STRANGE™
SORCERER SUPREME
THE CONCLUSION!
CLEA
BATTLING FOR CONTROL OF THE DARK DIMENSION!